

Remarks

Claims 1-6, 11-14, and 17-37 are pending in the application. Claims 7-10 and 38 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 15 and 16 have been withdrawn. Applicant reserves the right to reinstate claims 15 and 16 upon the finding of a viable generic claim. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 7 and 8. Claims 12, 13, and 31 have been rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-6, 11-14, and 17-37.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 21, and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,315,712 to Rovegno. Moreover, claim 38 is discussed in this rejection and Applicant assumes that it was also rejected. Claim 38 has been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection is overcome. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 7 and 8. Claim 8 was previously held to be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claim (i.e., claim 1) and any intervening claims (i.e., claim 7). Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, overcomes the rejection. Claims 2, 5-7, 21, and 27 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 3-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,928,137 to Green. Claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3 and 4 overcome the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 11, 14, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0060681 to Yokota. Claims 11, 14, and 20 depend from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 11, 14 and 20 overcome the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of Yokota, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,630,783 to Steinberg. Claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 17 and 18 overcome the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of Yokota, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,549,542 to Kovalcheck. Claim 19 depends from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 19 overcomes the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,941,454 to Wood. Claims 22-24 depend from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 22-24 overcome the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims 21, 25-26, 28, and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,982,725 to Hibino et al. Claims 21, 25-26, 28, and 30 depend from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 21, 25-26, 28, and 30 overcome the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claim 29 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rovegno in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,658,238 to Suzuki et al. Claim 29 depends from claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 29 overcomes the rejection for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicant does not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection.

Claims Indicated as Allowable

Claims 12, 13, and 31 have been rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. As the Examiner previously indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten as such, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 12, 13, and 31. Claims 32-37 depend from claim 31 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-6, 11-14, and 17-37

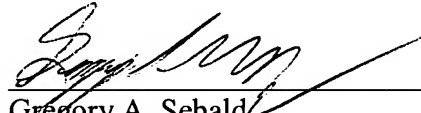
In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



Respectfully submitted,

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